

and critical approaches is refreshing and invigorating. The overall scholarship is sound, and he cites an impressive array of sources, indicating that he has left few stones unturned in his interrogation of literary history. Aside from some small typos and several passages that tend to wax heavy in the use of critical jargon, the only fault I find with the work is its uneven focus. While arguing in the beginning for an extra-canonical, data-driven approach, Zwicker often buttresses his main arguments not with data but rather anecdotes or close readings of canonical works. And although the beginning and ending years of the long nineteenth century are well covered, the crucial period from the 1830s through the 1880s receives much less attention.

However, so many new and interesting insights are offered within the book that I think it unrealistic to expect them all to be significantly expounded upon in a single volume. I believe that the vast majority of readers, particularly those interested in the history of Japanese narrative, popular literature, and literary history, will be challenged and often satisfied by Zwicker's thought-provoking reconsideration of many central theoretical issues. The work reads well (I particularly enjoyed several turns of phrase: Tamenaga Shunsui as the "sorcerer of sentiment" comes immediately to mind), and I believe that it will amply reward those who look to understand the sentimentality that prevailed in Japanese novels during the nineteenth century.

Perhaps it will even help them better comprehend the sentimentality of contemporary Japanese television dramas!

William E. Clarke and Wendy E. Cobcroft.

Tandai Shōshin Roku Sydney: Premodern

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So much of what scholars have been able to ascertain about the life and career of Ueda Akinari 上田秋成 (1734-1809) is informed by a corpus of personal writings that he composed during the final years of his life—a substantial body of work which includes *Chaka suigen* 茶瘕醉言 (*Drunken words of a tea addict*, c.1807), *Fumihōgu* 文反古 (*Discarded letters*, 1808), and *Tandai shōshin roku* 胆大小心録 (1808). Now, for the first time in English,

readers have access to a complete, fully annotated translation of the work that is unquestionably the best source for understanding this complex figure and his views. William E. Clarke and Wendy E. Cobcroft's translation of *Tandai Shōshin Roku* fills a longstanding void in the canon of early modern Japanese literature in English translation, and affords English language readers, some of whom will come to this after text after reading Anthony Chambers's recent translation of *Ugetsu monogatari* 雨月物語 (*Tales of Moonlight and Rain*, 1776), an opportunity to learn more about one of the true "renaissance men" of early modern Japan.

To date, only a few excerpts of the work have been available in English translation, primarily through Susanna Fessler's "Nature of the Kami: Ueda Akinari and *Tandai Shōshin Roku*," which includes translations of seven sections (numbers 13 and 26-31) out of the total one hundred and sixty three.³ While Fessler's article is valuable for its commentary on Akinari's views of the supernatural, its publication, nearly fifteen years ago, has long highlighted the need for a faithful translation of the entire work. After all, Akinari holds forth on a great many more topics in *Tandai shōshin roku* than foxes, badgers and ghosts; true to the genre of *zuihitsu* 随筆, his meandering brush touches upon contemporary and historical events, social customs, and perhaps most famously, his relationships with contemporaries like Moto'ori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801). Akinari keenly sensed that he was nearing the end of his life while writing *Tandai shōshin roku*, and so it is not surprising that, no longer beholden to the consequences of his statements, he should offer very candid views throughout the work, not to mention a liberal dose of vitriol. All in all, it is a rich historical and literary document, and should be of interest to anyone studying early modern Japan, not simply the work of Akinari.

Fortunately for those who have longed to include this work in their teaching curriculum, the new translation of *Tandai shōshin roku* is worth the wait. In the hands of Clarke and Cobcroft, Akinari's

³ *Monumenta Nipponica* 51, no. 1 (Spring, 1996): 1-15.

prose is given a lively rendition, evincing a rare combination of playfulness and academic rigor. In the original, the prose style of *Tandai shōshin roku* exemplifies Akinari's penchant for intermingling colloquial and literary registers. In many ways, this linguistic hybridity reflects the various facets of Akinari's complex personality—a high-minded scholar, poet, and tea connoisseur who was wont to indulge in regional colloquialisms from time to time. As much as the tenor of the prose makes *Tandai shōshin roku* a pleasure to read in the original, it is easy to see how this mode of writing would pose challenges to the translator. Yet one of the hallmarks of this translation's quality, and an indication of how thoroughly the translator has researched his subject, is the preponderance of footnotes that gloss every potentially obscure display of Akinari's social knowledge and erudition, which is formidable.

Counterbalancing the academic rigor of the translation is its sensitivity to the richness of Akinari's language, especially to his humor, irony, and wit. It is most heartening for this reader to see that Akinari's wit loses none of its edge in translation, as the following passages illustrate:

Lately, with blindness and the onset of old age, I no longer bother about correct characters, or anything else for that matter, and allow my writing brush to skelter along as it pleases, so that some people say I am hard to read. I laughingly reply, "You are somewhat late in your accusation." (P. 117)

I hear that they are even selling counterfeiters of my bad hand. This is of no profit to me, but I deem it an honour. I should like to meet those people and express my thanks. (P. 121)

Invariably, even with the most carefully rendered translation, there are bound to be objections to certain word choices or renderings of passages. Some may balk at the use of British English colloquialisms like "flibbertigibbets" (p. 165), objecting that they are too obscure for most readers; but I would submit that they are apt approximations of Akinari's own indulgences in Kamigata colloquialisms.

For this reader, the only truly disappointing

translation choice in *Tandai shōshin roku* was that of leaving the title untranslated. The translator's claims that the heading "defies meaningful translation" and that all earlier attempts at translating it "do not give any idea of its content" (p. 37) could just as easily be made about half of the works in Akinari's oeuvre—especially those which, like *Kuse monogatari*, exhibit orthographic variations in their multiple manuscript versions. It would seem that there should have been no more satisfying task for the translator than that of translating the title, both to bring closure to this ambitious undertaking and to leave a mark on subsequent scholarship referencing the work. That he refrained from doing so is surely indicative of his modesty.

The translation is preceded by a substantial critical introduction, which endeavors to cover a vast territory of social, intellectual, and cultural history, presumably for the benefit of a general audience. Readers with a firm background in early modern Japanese history may want to skip to the detailed account of Akinari's life and career, as well as to the final section detailing the textual provenance of *Tandai shōshin roku*. One of the truly commendable aspects of the introduction is its use of number citations, which refer the reader to sections of *Tandai shōshin roku* that correspond to topics given critical treatment. This affords the reader various points of entry into the main text, which does not demand a sequential reading, as well as guides for mapping out thematic readings of related sections. In the case of "The Life and Writings of Ueda Akinari" (pp. 1-12), for example, the citations enable one to read the sections pertaining to Akinari's life, twenty-three in all, in conjunction with the biography offered in the introduction. Of course, a rewarding experience awaits the reader who begins reading with section one and follows Akinari's meandering brush as it wends through the regions of his capacious intellect.

On a closing note, it seems fitting to mention the unusual circumstances of this translation's posthumous publication, and what they may portend for the future of academic publishing. After the passing of William Clarke, preparation of the manuscript was undertaken by his widow, Wendy Cobcroft; final editing was overseen by Matthew Stavros, moderator of Premodern Japanese Studies (PMJS). The final product is available for download through the PMJS website and Google Books, and for pur-

chase through PMJS and major online retailers like Amazon. The availability of the translation in these multiple formats raises some interesting technical and ethical issues, from the aesthetics of reading of a text in PDF format versus bound copy, to our responsibility as scholars to support quality work in our field through purchase. In many ways, the decisions we make regarding format, purchase and hosting of the text will determine the future directions of academic publishing. Hopefully, scholars working in early modern Japanese studies will consider purchasing a bound copy of this high-quality translation for themselves and their academic libraries. While the very notion of buying books may seem antiquated today, in this case, it seems a fitting way to recognize the accomplishment of a dedicated translator and commemorate his legacy.